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WALLA WALLA DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS

News Release

22-070 US Army Corps of Engineers takes turbine out of service at Little Goose Lock and Dam to inspect and repair oil leak

Published Oct. 25, 2022



Little Goose construction started in June 1963. The filling of Lake Bryan began on Feb. 16, 1970, and continued until elevation 638 feet was reached on Feb. 25, 1970. The dam is 2,655 feet long with an effective height of about 100 feet. It is located on the Snake River near Starbuck, Wash., and upstream of Lake West, the reservoir formed by Lower Monumental Dam. It is a concrete gravity dam with an earthfill abutment embankment. It includes a navigation lock and eightbay spillway 512 feet long, which has eight 50 feet by 60 feet tainter gates. The installation of power generating units one through three was completed, and the first unit began producing power in March 1970. Additional power units four through six were installed and power for those units came online in July 1978. Revisions were made to the juvenile fish facility in 1982 and 1984.

STARBUCK, Wash. – Maintenance staff at Little Goose Lock and Dam have confirmed an oil leak in the Main Unit #1 turbine system, some of which was released to the Snake River. The turbine is part of the hydropower generating system at the dam.

Staff are actively assessing the amount of oil lost and the duration of the leak. There are indications that between 300 to 600 gallons of oil leaked over the previous 90 days. The oil is not recoverable, and there were no identified sheens in the river. Technicians installed oil absorbent booms to capture any potential additional leaks.

The Walla Walla District is dedicated to oil accountability, and appropriate oil leak responses. The turbine has been put into a forced outage and has been isolated from the river as repairs are being made.

“As environmental stewards, our goal is to respond swiftly and decisively during oil leak responses,” Paul Ocker, Operations Division chief for the Walla Walla District, said. “Our team at Little Goose Dam took appropriate actions to remove the turbine from service, assess and contain the leak. The turbine will remain out of service and isolated from the river until repaired.”

The district has notified the appropriate regulatory and response agencies including the Environmental Protection Agency, United States Coast Guard, Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission, and Washington Department of Ecology.

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Release no. 22-069

oil LITTLE GOOSE dam river maintenance spill leak Turbine